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TRENDS IN COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA
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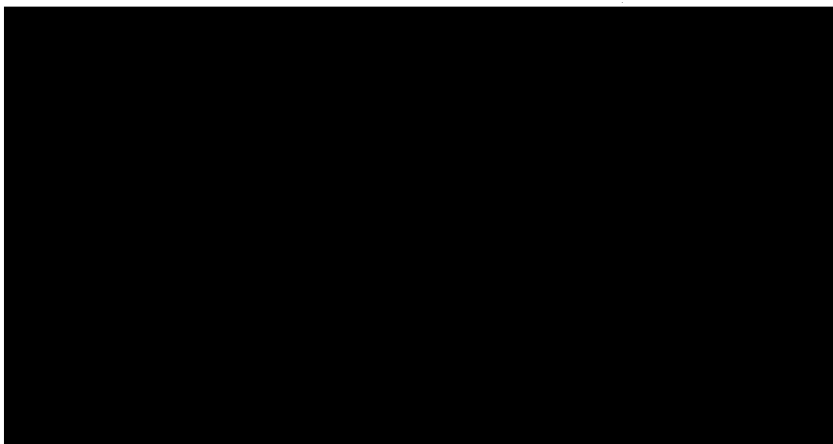
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TRENDS

In Communist Propaganda



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28 DECEMBER 1973
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ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

USSR WELCOMES GENEVA CONFERENCE, BEGINNING OF "PRACTICAL WORK"

Moscow has welcomed with wary optimism the 21-22 December formal opening of the Middle East peace conference in Geneva, while underlining the need for practical measures to maintain the momentum toward a political settlement. In this connection, Soviet media noted with approval the conference decision to establish a military working group to resume the discussions on disengagement of Egyptian and Israeli forces. Moscow viewed this as a success achieved despite the wishes of "some people" to adjourn the conference indefinitely, and described disengagement as the most urgent task. Keying to a theme from Foreign Minister Gromyko's speech, the comment has stressed the importance of recognizing the inadmissibility of acquisition of territory by force and of insuring full implementation of Resolution 242. At the same time Moscow has acknowledged the difficulties facing the conference, noting that while a useful dialog had begun, the participants' stands were "admittedly" still far apart "for the moment" and that no one expected all the complex issues to be solved quickly.

Not unexpectedly, Moscow did not report Gromyko's meeting in Geneva with Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban, and it treated Eban's statements to the press with a mixture of criticism and reserve. PRAVDA complained that Eban interpreted Resolution 242 to suit himself; it observed that Tel Aviv's attitude toward settlement of the Middle East problem was a "source of distress" to those hoping for a constructive outcome of the conference. Soviet media on the 26th, citing alleged Israeli cease-fire violations, military preparations and other "provocations," said such saber-rattling was "hardly the best accompaniment" for peace efforts; the media also professed to see evidence of Israeli foot-dragging in Eban's statement that he would be surprised if the troop disengagement problem was solved in the near future.

GROMYKO SPEECH Gromyko's moderate speech at the conference stressed the need for an Israeli commitment to withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967. His remarks on elements of a settlement were in keeping with previous Soviet positions. He called Resolution 242 a "realistic, well-substantiated approach" to a settlement and defined the conference task to be the working out of a specific and realistic program for implementation of this resolution, with the sides' agreement recorded in appropriate

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"binding" documents. If necessary, he said, the Soviet Union was prepared to make "appropriate commitments" with other powers to add weight to the agreements. He touched on possible measures such as reciprocal demilitarized zones and the temporary deployment of "international personnel" in some areas. While he did not specifically refer to opening the Suez Canal, he mentioned the negative consequences suffered by many states as a result of the conflict, and in this context mentioned that a settlement would favorably affect international economic cooperation, trade and shipping.

On the issue of Israel's right to exist, Gromyko contended that this was recognized through the UN decision on the formation of that state and was confirmed by the fact that many states, including the Soviet Union, had established diplomatic relations with Israel. He indicated, as Moscow commentators have done previously, that Israel's Arab neighbors had agreed in effect to the recognition of Israel when they expressed readiness to reach agreement on the basis of Security Council resolutions which recognized the right to existence of all states in the conflict. At another point Gromyko reiterated the Soviet position that the USSR is not hostile to the state of Israel as such, but objects to its policy of annexation and its ignoring of UN resolutions.

On the Palestinian issue, Gromyko said only that justice must be assured and the Palestinians' legitimate rights safeguarded. While he said this problem cannot be resolved without "participation of representatives of the Arab people of Palestine," he avoided spelling out the form of this representation.

U.S., SOVIET ROLES Moscow has on occasion mentioned its role as co-sponsor of the Geneva conference and has hailed the effects of U.S.-Soviet detente in helping pave the way for the talks. At the same time, some slight sniping at the United States has appeared in routine-level Moscow broadcasts in Arabic which again complained that Western media were trying to give American diplomacy credit for the Geneva conference. An Arabic-language broadcast on the 24th noted that Secretary Kissinger had not included any criticism of Israel's refusal to abide by Security Council resolutions in his conference speech. TASS, on the other hand, carried a straightforward summary of Kissinger's conference speech, as well as the speeches of other participants. It also briefly reported the Kissinger-Gromyko meetings in Geneva, Kissinger's departure remarks, and his "optimistic assessment" to newsmen in Washington in which he expressed hope that Egypt and Israel would reach agreement on military disengagement next month.

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A dispatch by TASS correspondents in Geneva on the 21st credited the convening of the talks to the "active stand and initiative of the two great powers," co-chairmen of the Geneva conference. The dispatch alluded indirectly to the diplomatic risks Moscow was taking in assuming a middleman role. It professed "perplexity" over the allegations of "some Western journalists" that the Soviet Union, to preserve good relations with the United States, intended to exert pressure on the Arabs to abandon their just demands. In the weekly observers roundtable broadcast by Moscow's domestic service on the 23d, IZVESTIYA's Matveyev also called attention to the "change for the better" in Soviet-American relations which made possible the joint approach on a cease-fire and the contacts between the two countries which were "instrumental in preparing the peace conference." Roundtable panelist Zamyatin took up U.S.-Soviet cooperation in another context: In a discussion of U.S. trade legislation "discriminating against the Soviet Union," he pointed out that the United States and the USSR were working together in Geneva for a Middle East settlement and asserted that those who worked against improvement of Soviet-U.S. relations were in effect opposing the settlement jointly pursued by the two countries.

SYRIAN POSITION Moscow has refrained from outright criticism of Syria's refusal to attend the Geneva conference but has shown little inclination to sympathize with it. A Moscow Arabic broadcast on the 20th implied that Syria's absence from the conference represents leaving the ranks of world public opinion ranged against Israel. While noting Syria's "justifiable distrust," the commentary reminded that "it must not be forgotten" that Israel's "aggressive actions" have earned it wide condemnation and isolation, and that in such a position Israel cannot easily overlook world public opinion and has been unable to thwart the conference. The broadcast cited an Egyptian spokesman as saying that Cairo understood Damascus' motives and misgivings and predicting that progress in the talks would open the door to Syrian participation.

Soviet commentator Matveyev, in the domestic service observers roundtable on the 23d, blandly noted Syria's position without defending it: Syria, he said, insists on linking its participation with Israeli withdrawal, and Israel insists that its prisoners of war should be returned first. Seeming to suggest that the issue would eventually be resolved, Matveyev added that Syria's chairs at the conference table remained unoccupied but that Secretary General Waldheim had expressed hope for Syrian participation, depending on progress in the conference. Earlier, Matveyev had commented that "the task of further strengthening the ranks of the Arab countries is still very pressing and topical."

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An Arabic-language commentary on the 25th implied that Syria was undermining Arab unity by its intransigence. The broadcast asserted that while Syria was not in principle opposed to holding the conference, it had made its participation conditional on an Israeli pledge to withdraw from the occupied territories and recognize Palestinian rights. This, the commentary argued, was essentially the same position held by Egypt and Jordan and thus--by implication--was no reason for Syria to refuse to attend the conference.

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MOSCOW HAILS OIL PRICE HIKE, URGES FURTHER ARAB ACTIONS

Moscow, apparently seeking to maintain credibility with the Arabs while collaborating with the United States in probing for a Middle Eastern peace formula, has adopted an increasingly partisan, anti-Western position in reporting and commenting on the oil issue for Middle Eastern audiences. Thus, in broadcasts beamed to the Middle East Moscow has hailed the oil price hike decided by the OPEC Gulf states at their meeting in Teheran on 23 December and has urged the oil-producing countries to take further actions against the Western oil monopolies. In this connection it has drawn favorable attention to the idea of withdrawing Arab funds from Western banks and to nationalization measures aimed at increasing Arab control over their own oil resources.

The tendentiousness of Moscow's reporting is further illustrated by its failure to acknowledge the decision by the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries in Kuwait on 25 December to ease their production cuts. A broadcast in Arabic on the 26th pegged to the OAPEC meeting merely said the participants had decided to continue the use of the oil weapon.

In a commentary beamed to Iran on 20 December Moscow accurately reported that the Persian Gulf states were preparing to double the posted prices of oil; it went on to suggest that the price hike should be followed by measures aimed at abrogating the various "enslaving commitments" undertaken by the oil-producing countries to the advantage of foreign companies. Other commentaries during the same period drew favorable attention to Iraq's nationalization measures and to the idea of withdrawing Arab funds from Western banks as measures to be considered by the Arab countries in carrying on the struggle for independence. A commentary in Arabic on the 19th, for example, pointed out that "many Arab public figures are calling for the withdrawal of Arab holdings from Western banks," a measure which, the commentary pointed out, "could aggravate the financial crisis in the capitalist world in the same way as the energy crisis." Another commentary in Arabic on the 20th praised the Iraqi example as a model for other Arab states to emulate, and asserted that "nationalization remains the most effective means" in the struggle against Zionism.

Moscow comment following the Teheran decisions similarly suggested that the price hike should be followed by further measures. In a commentary in Persian on 24 December, Moscow suggested that the price hike itself might be too modest and not truly reflective of

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market demand. It pointed out that in its recent oil auction Iran had sold oil at prices one-third higher than the price fixed by the OPEC Gulf states. It went on to say that the "struggle against oil imperialism" was far from over and predicted "new victories" for the OPEC states in eliminating a "system based on the principles of exploitation."

In the meantime, Moscow has shown sensitivity over reports it has profited from the oil boycott to increase its sales to the West. Referring to such reports in its own comment, Moscow has denounced them as "provocations." Typical was a commentary in Arabic on 27 December which denounced a Kuwaiti newspaper for allegedly repeating Israeli propaganda to the effect that the USSR was selling oil to the Western countries "behind the backs of the Arabs." In a highly defensive tone, the commentary protested that Soviet oil shipments to Europe amounted to no more than four percent of European consumption, and that Soviet oil was exported to the United States only "rarely."

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U. S. - SOVIET RELATIONS

MOSCOW ATTACKS HOUSE TRADE VOTE, CONFIDENT ABOUT OUTCOME

Moscow has sharply criticized the 11 December vote by the House of Representatives approving an amendment to the trade bill that linked most-favored-nation treatment and credits to finance U.S.-Soviet trade with Soviet emigration policy. Denouncing the House action as interference in Soviet internal affairs by opponents of detente, Soviet commentators have warned that if the measure becomes law it could impair political as well as economic relations between the two countries. At the same time, however, Moscow has tempered its criticism by publicizing reports showing a steady increase in bilateral trade during the past year, by suggesting the existence of widespread opposition to the House action, and by intimating that the President will veto a trade bill that does not incorporate commitments made to Moscow.

Moscow reacted promptly and critically to the House vote. A domestic radio report from Washington on the 12th said the decision blocked MFN and credits by "interfering in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union." IZVESTIYA's Mikhail Sagatelyan on 16 December said the House action "runs counter to the normalization of U.S.-Soviet relations" and NEW TIMES, according to TASS on the 19th, reiterated that "long-range and large-scale trade and economic cooperation between the USSR and the USA must be based on equality, mutual respect of interests and non-interference in domestic affairs." Other comment stressed that the United States stood to lose as much as the Soviet Union if the House action was not moderated. But the press also made it clear that Moscow was taking the decision in stride and was confident the Administration would continue to push for expanded trade. For example, Sagatelyan noted that the House decision was "contrary to the official course of the U.S. Government and can by no means be regarded as the last say on this issue."

Within days of the House action the central press began publicizing statements by U.S. officials that stressed the critical dependence of detente upon trade. PRAVDA on 14 December reported Deputy Secretary of State Rush's remark in a Chicago speech that "Soviet-American detente depends to a large extent on improved economic ties between the USSR and the USA. . . . By renouncing such ties we can be confronted with renewed tensions." The next day PRAVDA reported similar remarks by Deputy Secretary of State William Casey. On the 20th Soviet deputy trade minister Semichastnov was reported

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by TASS to have declared at a Moscow press conference that "the development of trade between the USSR and the USA will be retarded if the U.S. Congress refuses to grant to this country most-favored-nation status." His press conference was not reported in the central press.

Soviet commentators have quoted liberally from U.S. statements indicating growing opposition to the House action and implying that the Senate and the Administration will be less hospitable to the House amendment. In a Moscow domestic radio commentary on 23 December, Yuriy Soltan cited U.S. sources for the view that "in Washington official circles the amendment is considered completely unacceptable." TASS on 21 December quoted Harold Scott, president of the U.S.-Soviet Trade and Economic Council, as stating that "he was sure the President would not sign a bill which did not agree with his position and his intention to develop economic relations with the Soviet Union." TASS Director-General Leonid Zamyatin, participating in the 23 December Moscow domestic radio international affairs roundtable, similarly cited a letter from the President to House Speaker Albert "in which he stated quite clearly that he would veto the trade reform bill if the articles discriminating against the Soviet Union were retained."

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COMMUNIST RELATIONS

MOSCOW MEETING STRESSES IDEOLOGY, SILENT ON WORLD CONFERENCE

Restrained communique descriptions of the atmosphere at the 18-19 December Moscow international conference of communist party secretaries on "ideological cooperation" and minimal followup comment suggest that little progress was made toward resolving differences on ideology and on the question of another world party conference. The final communique, published in the Soviet central press on the 20th, characterized the conference atmosphere as merely "businesslike" and "comradely."

The attendance of delegations from all CEMA member countries, including Romania, Cuba and Mongolia, apparently was in response to the call of the July 1973 Crimea meeting of Soviet bloc party leaders for "political, economic, and ideological" cooperation among the socialist countries. The Moscow conference was hosted by a CPSU delegation headed by Suslov and was attended by secretaries of Politburo rank--except for Bulgaria's delegation--from all of Moscow's orthodox East European allies; the most high-powered delegation, with three Politburo-level secretaries, came from the GDR. The Romanian party delegation was headed by alternate Executive Committee member and secretary Burtica. The visiting delegations had a "cordial and comradely" meeting on the 20th with Brezhnev, who, according to Moscow radio, told the delegates that the "fruitful" results of the conference would facilitate the dissemination of propaganda on "the achievements of real socialism" in the struggle against "bourgeois ideology."

The conference communique made no mention of the 1969 Moscow international party conference nor of the advisability of another such conference, publicly suggested by Hungary's Kadar and Bulgaria's Zhivkov in Budapest on 6 December. It merely reported that the participants "had exchanged" views on the ideological activity of their respective parties and had discussed "urgent questions of the further deepening of ideological cooperation between fraternal parties under present-day conditions." The delegates reportedly vowed to intensify both bilateral and multilateral cooperation aimed at "consolidating" the socialist community under "Marxism-Leninism and socialist internationalism," propagating "socialist patriotism and proletarian internationalism," and countering "ideological subversion against the USSR and other socialist countries" in the current era of detente.

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Followup comment on the conference has been minimal and generally uninformative. Thus, the Soviet weekly observers roundtable broadcast by Radio Moscow on the 23d, mentioned the conference and the delegates' meeting with Brezhnev without disclosing any new information on either. Commentaries in Warsaw's TRYBUNA LUDU, also on the 23d, and in the East Berlin domestic service on the 20th similarly stuck to generalities in stressing the importance of the conference in combating ideological subversion and consolidating detente. Prague's RUDE PRAVO on the 21st went beyond the communique in declaring that the Moscow conference "implements the conclusions" reached at the July Crimea meeting. Stressing the need to "adjust" ideological work in the era of detente, the Prague party organ hailed "joint and coordinated action" as the only means of countering the divisive tactics of "present-day anticommunism."

ROMANIAN POSITION An indication that Romania's independent position had been maintained at the Moscow meeting was provided in a report on a meeting of the Romanian Communist Party Executive Committee, carried by AGERPRES and the Bucharest domestic service on the 27th: The report noted briefly that the RCP Executive Committee "unanimously approved" the manner in which the Romanian delegation had "fulfilled its mandate" at the Moscow meeting. This mandate, the Executive Committee said, was fully in accord with the established line of the RCP--a line which should "be followed in the future also."

YUGOSLAV COMMENT The only communist comment linking the Moscow party secretaries' conference to the quest for a new world party conference came from the Yugoslavs, who did not attend. An 18 December TANJUG commentary remarked that "it is assumed that the present consultation is opening in fact broader preparations for a new world consultation of communist and workers parties." The commentary conjectured that this topic had also been discussed at the Crimea meeting and in recent bilateral meetings between the Soviet leaders and leaders of the French, Italian, and other foreign communist parties. On the 26th, the Zagreb radio gratuitously reported a statement in VJESNIK that there was "no change" in Yugoslavia's attitude toward a new international communist conference "due to be held in Moscow in 1975." Contrary to "malicious" Western speculation, it added, the LCY's decision whether to attend would be governed solely by the "agenda" of the projected conference.

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SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS

PEKING SUSTAINS SHARP POLEMICS AGAINST SOVIET POLICIES

Chinese indictments of Soviet international policies have failed to subside in the wake of the conciliatory PRC greetings message marking last month's October Revolution anniversary. Though the message had suggested flexibility in China's stance by stressing traditional Sino-Soviet friendship and by noting a desire to settle the border issue peacefully,* recent Chinese comment has been at pains to sustain the hard line evident since the CCP's 10th Congress last August. Most notably, Peking has taken Moscow to task over sensitive border problems and has indulged in a rare criticism of Soviet policy toward Taiwan.

A lengthy 21 December NCNA correspondent's commentary on the Soviet "Asian collective security system" referred in unusual detail to crucial Sino-Soviet border issues in an effort to discredit this Moscow proposal. The report charged that Moscow's security arrangement would preclude change in international boundaries in Asia and is an attempt to legalize Soviet occupation of "illegally seized" Chinese territory. In a rare effort apparently seeking to counter recent Soviet charges of PRC intransigence in the stalled Peking border talks, the NCNA commentator contrasted Peking's willingness to use the existing "unequal" treaties as a basis for a settlement with Moscow's stubbornness, charging that Moscow is unmoving and "does not recognize any Chinese complaint."

The NCNA commentary also referred to the armed clashes of 1969 along the Ussuri River frontier and labeled the subsequent buildup of Soviet forces at the border as a form of "armed threat". By so categorizing the Soviet forces buildup, Peking suggests there is little prospect for movement in the border talks, inasmuch as the Chinese have stated repeatedly--most recently in their October Revolution anniversary message--that only under conditions free of such threats can the frontier problem be solved. The article also indirectly denigrated Moscow's longstanding proposal in the border talks for an agreement on the non-use of force, charging that the presence of Soviet forces along the

* The Chinese message is discussed in 7 November 1973 TRENDS page 22. The Soviet response is discussed in 28 November 1973 TRENDS, pages 10-11.

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frontier "shows that the Soviet revisionists' allegation that they 'will not use force' or 'threaten others with force' is nothing but a fraud."

A 14 December NCNA article had similarly underlined China's firm stance against Moscow by attacking Soviet policy over the sensitive Taiwan issue for the first time since March 1972. Employing a technique used in similar Chinese criticisms in the past, the article selectively cited recent Soviet media coverage of Taiwan as evidence that Moscow supports the position of the Chiang Kai-shek government, independent of mainland control. Going on to recite a historical bill of particulars against Soviet Taiwan policy, including charges of past USSR-ROC diplomatic and journalistic contacts, the article claimed that Moscow's actions have demonstrated "how hostile the Soviet revisionist leading clique is towards the Chinese people."

This NCNA treatment produced a Moscow response on the 17th in a Mandarin-language commentary that justifiably complained of NCNA's slanted presentation of the Soviet position. Moscow noted in particular that NCNA's excerpted presentation of a NEW TIMES article in edition No. 19, 1973 had failed to report that the article actually expressed support for Peking's claim to Taiwan as "an inalienable part of the PRC."

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INDOCHINA

DRV COMMENT ON KISSINGER-THO TALKS URGES NEW U.S. POLICIES

Hanoi claims that its willingness to agree to the 20 December Paris meeting between Secretary Kissinger and Le Duc Tho was proof of its correct attitude toward the Paris peace agreement, and that the future course of events in Vietnam depends upon the United States. The view that the U.S.-DRV meeting demonstrated Hanoi's respect for the peace accord was offered in a 22 December NHAN DAN article, the only known press comment on the talks to date. The article went on to routinely accuse Saigon and Washington of deliberate and systematic violations of the accord and to warn the United States against continuing its involvement in Vietnam.

Le Duc Tho commented on the meeting in a 24 December interview on French television, reported by DRV media on the 26th. Tho noted that in his talks with Kissinger both sides had reexamined the situation in Vietnam and presented their views, but that there was insufficient time to discuss "all the complicated problems posed by the present serious situation in South Vietnam." He repeated the substance of the earlier U.S.-DRV announcement, reported by Hanoi media on the 21st, that the channel would be maintained for further discussions as warranted by events, adding, in response to a question, that no date has been agreed upon for a future meeting. Tho's 27 December departure from Paris "for home" was reported by Hanoi without comment on the following day.

In his interview Tho stressed U.S. responsibility for the situation in Vietnam and contended that events could develop in either of two directions, depending on U.S. policies. On the one hand he suggested it may be necessary for the communists to resume a protracted military struggle: Tho declared that if the United States "continues violating the agreement," then the PRG "shall not sit idle" but respond appropriately to defend the agreement and the "gains of the revolution." In such a case, he added, "the Vietnamese people's just struggle will go through many more difficulties and complexities, but will surely triumph." On the other hand, Tho indicated that Hanoi has not ruled out the possibility of continuing toward its goals within the framework of the Paris agreement: He said that if the United States implemented the peace agreement, did not encourage Saigon to continue the war, recognized the existence of two administrations and armies in the South, stopped reconnaissance over the North, and contributed to DRV reconstruction, then "real peace" could be guaranteed and conditions created for normalizing U.S.-DRV relations.

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DRV ANNIVERSARIES COMMEMORATED; DEFENSE MINISTER GIAP ABSENT

Hanoi marked the 29th anniversary of the founding of the Vietnam People's Army (22 December) and the 27th anniversary of Resistance Day (19 December) with a traditional meeting on the 21st sponsored by the Defense Ministry and Vietnam Fatherland Front organizations. DRV Defense Minister Vo Nguyen Giap was conspicuously missing from the list of DRV party, state, and military leaders reported by Hanoi to have attended the meeting. The list included Truong Chinh, Pham Van Dong, who opened the meeting with a short statement, and VWP Politburo member and VPA Chief of Staff Colonel General Van Tien Dung, who delivered the main speech in Giap's absence. Dung noted in his speech that the meeting also commemorated the DRV struggle during the U.S. B-52 attacks on Hanoi and Haiphong in December 1972, an event which apparently will be added to Hanoi's list of traditional anniversaries.

Reviewing the past year in standard terms, Van Tien Dung complained that the Paris agreement had not brought peace as it should have and that U.S. attempts to "implement neocolonialism and the Nixon Doctrine" have created an "unstable and grave situation" in South Vietnam. Nevertheless, he maintained, "the southern revolution" is in a "victorious and strong position and is firmly advancing," while the United States and Saigon "are in a defeated, weak, and declining position." Condemning recent alleged intrusions into DRV airspace and territorial waters by U.S. aircraft and ships, and "insolent threats" to resume bombing in Indochina, Dung warned the United States not to "play with fire" and added that the Vietnamese have sufficient determination and forces to "frustrate all new schemes and acts of the Americans and their lackeys." He also routinely reiterated that the PLAF will continue to deal "counterblows in all forms and with appropriate forces" as long as Saigon, "on U.S. orders, continues its acts of war."

The anniversaries also prompted the usual press and radio comment, including a QUAN DOI NHAN DAN editorial on 19 December which was atypically outspoken in urging an offensive posture. The editorial appeared to suggest that the communists should not merely respond with counterattacks to Saigon operations, but should take the initiative in launching attacks. It held that taking such initiative was the proper way to avoid being attacked, and cited the decision to take the offensive against Diem as a "lesson which assumes a important realistic significance" in the "entire course of our revolutionary struggle." The editorial also stressed that "only by consistently conducting a revolutionary struggle can we advance our revolution toward the final goal."

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GIAP ABSENCE Although Giap did not appear at the anniversary meeting to give his customary keynote address, the traditional messages of congratulations from foreign counterparts and the PRG were addressed to him as defense minister. Giap has not appeared in public since 6 October, when he played host to a visiting delegation headed by PRG/NFLSV leader Nguyen Huu Tho. He also was absent from public view for an extended period earlier this year--from July till 12 September, when he reappeared in Hanoi to join in welcoming a Cuban delegation led by Fidel Castro. From mid-September through the first week in October Giap appeared on more than 10 occasions, leaving the impression that his prolonged absence was not due to any incapacity.

On only one previous occasion in at least the past 15 years has Giap missed army anniversary celebrations: He disappeared from public view in mid-November 1967 and failed to attend anniversary celebrations in December; he finally resumed public activities on 5 February 1968, less than a week after the launching of the massive Tet offensive in South Vietnam. In 1968 Giap dropped out of sight again after an appearance on 23 February and then did not reappear until 1 May.*

* For further background on Giap's activities, see the TRENDS of 6 September 1973, pages 11-12.

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MEETINGS IN NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM MARK NFLSV ANNIVERSARY

SOUTH VIETNAM The 13th anniversary of the founding of the NFLSV on 20 December was marked on the 19th with a meeting sponsored by the Front, the Vietnam Alliance, and the PRG. In the absence of NFLSV Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho, not yet back from his visits to the USSR and East Europe, the anniversary address was delivered by Huynh Tan Phat, vice chairman and secretary general of the NFLSV and president of the PRG. According to a 24 December Liberation Radio report, another anniversary address was given, at a 20 December meeting, by Le Chan, deputy political commissar and representative of the PLAF Command. Available reports do not indicate what other Front leaders may have appeared at anniversary celebrations.

Huynh Tan Phat, in his address to the 19 December meeting, evaluated the situation in South Vietnam in conventional terms, claiming that the Paris agreement had created an unprecedentedly favorable situation "with many fine prospects" for an advance to "total victory." He drew a pessimistic lesson from past experience, however, contending that "more than anyone else we" recognize that to achieve peace, independence, and freedom "we must struggle persistently, resourcefully, and bravely; we must fear no sacrifices or hardships; and we must not hesitate to engage in a protracted fight."

Phat assessed the balance of forces in Vietnam as "developing ever more in our favor and to the detriment" of the United States and Saigon. A more decisive advantage has been suggested occasionally by NFLSV spokesmen: Nguyen Huu Tho, in a report on his travels abroad delivered at a 2-3 November meeting, had claimed that "the current balance of forces within the framework of South Vietnam as well as within the framework of all of our country is entirely favorable to us." Similarly, the 1 September message from Tho and Phat on the DRV's National Day claimed that the "entire country's revolutionary forces are stronger than the counter-revolutionary forces."

Phat reaffirmed the position--adopted by the NFLSV and PRG in November 1972--that "national reconciliation and concord" are the Front's "present primary basic and long-term policy."* In line

* The background on the policy of "reconciliation and concord" is discussed in the TRENDS of 24 January 1973, pages 5-7.

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with this stance, he reiterated that the NFLSV is ready to contact and consult with all other forces, organizations, and individuals, including those in the Saigon army and administration, "who desire peace and national concord and wish to struggle together for the strict implementation of the Paris agreement. . . ."

Le Chan's anniversary speech, summarized by Liberation Radio, stressed the need to strengthen "the revolutionary ranks" and "defeat all the schemes" of the United States and Saigon. At the same time Le Chan reiterated that the NFLSV and PRG advocate concord and the elimination of hatred, and said that the PLAF would welcome members of the Saigon army who wished to join in "saving and developing" the country. Le Chan repeated the warning of the 15 October PLAF Command order that violations of the peace accord will be met with "counterblows anywhere, in all forms, and with appropriate forces." He added that Saigon's "only way out" was to "end its dependence on the United States, correctly implement the Paris agreement, and rapidly agree with the PRG on a political solution."

NORTH VIETNAM Hanoi commemorated the NFLSV anniversary with a meeting on the 19th attended by representatives from the Vietnam Fatherland Front (VFF) and other organizations. The ranking leader present, VWP Politburo member Hoang Van Hoan, gave an opening speech; the main addresses were delivered by a member of the VFF Presidium, Nguyen Van Huyen, and the head of the PRG representation in Hanoi, Nguyen Van Tien. Huyen routinely lauded the NFLSV and its achievements and claimed that the balance of forces in South Vietnam and Indochina had undergone a basic favorable change. He asserted that the struggle for implementation of the Paris agreement would be "protracted, complicated, and hard," but would be "crowned with glorious victories."

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NOTES

CHIANG CHING: NCNA's English-language service on 27 December carried a report containing praise for Chiang Ching's role in creating the Yellow River piano concerto, the first such praise from a Peking source since a 24 September report lauded her achievements in reforming Peking opera. Neither report was carried by NCNA's domestic service or broadcast over Radio Peking. In early December Chiang broke a nine-week absence from public view when she made three appearances in the company of Chou En-lai. Though Peking has thus given her name renewed currency in the international community, she has not been ascribed a current leadership role in the cultural sphere. She has not been credited with any of the recent model operas, notably "Tuchuan Mountain," which was published in RED FLAG No. 10 to dramatize the party's supremacy over the army. Her failure to be cited for a guiding role in current cultural affairs accords with her reduced political status, as reflected in her failure to be promoted to the Politburo Standing Committee, and may help explain the attacks on ideological and cultural shortcomings in the ongoing anti-Confucius campaign.

CULTURAL REVOLUTION DEFENSE: Shanghai radio on 23 December extended the current defense of PRC cultural revolution reforms to include changes in factory work regulations, even changes that are no longer in effect. The broadcast noted confusion among some workers in a plant that dropped a quality control regulation during the cultural revolution, only to restore it "after the masses had discussed it." These workers wondered "if we had known this would happen, then why did we do it in the first place?" According to the report and an accompanying WEN HUI PAO-LIBERATION DAILY editor's note, the original discarding of the rule was "a real revolutionary act" because it discarded reactionary distinctions between technicians and workers that had caused conflicts. While the regulation's provisions have not basically changed, the editor's note explains, the cultural revolution has changed the political line, the "worker's position as master has been firmly established," and hence the workers no longer oppose the regulation as a form of class oppression.

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APPENDIX

MOSCOW, PEKING BROADCAST STATISTICS 17 - 23 DECEMBER 1973

MOSCOW (2793 items)

Vietnam	(3%)	11%
[Nguyen Huu Tho in	(2%)	6%]
USSR		
[NFLSV 13th	(--)	4%]
Anniversary		
Middle East Peace	(--)	10%
Conference, Geneva		
[Gromyko Speech	(--)	5%]
Soyuz 13 Flight	(--)	5%
China	(5%)	4%
Supreme Soviet	(17%)	4%
Session, 12-14 Dec.		

Peking (984 items)

Domestic Issues	(40%)	53%
Europe	(5%)	8%
[EC, NATO, CSCE	(4%)	6%]
Meetings		
Middle East	(4%)	7%
[Geneva Peace	(--)	4%]
Conference		
Vietnam	(1%)	4%
Korea	(9%)	4%
Cambodia UN Membership	(5%)	3%
Debate		

These statistics are based on the voicecast commentary output of the Moscow and Peking domestic and international radio services. The term "commentary" is used to denote the lengthy item—radio talk, speech, press article or editorial, government or party statement, or diplomatic note. Items of extensive reportage are counted as commentaries.

Figures in parentheses indicate volume of comment during the preceding week.

Topics and events given major attention in terms of volume are not always discussed in the body of the Trends. Some may have been covered in prior issues; in other cases the propaganda content may be routine or of minor significance.